

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Jean Forbes Adams

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Jean Forbes Adams was the second of three children born to Charles N. Forbes and Helen Jean Stokes Forbes. Her father, a Bishop Museum botanist, in 1917 recommended to Lāna'i Ranch manager George C. Munro the planting of Norfolk pine trees to improve the island's water supply and the planting of eucalyptus trees to serve as windbreaks. Forbes died in 1920. His wife then moved to Lāna'i to work as secretary, bookkeeper, postmistress, and storekeeper for Munro.

The Forbes family lived in a home located next door to the Lāna'i Ranch office and store in Kō'e'e.

Jean attended Kō'e'e School, a one-room schoolhouse, located where the Cavendish Golf Course stands today. In 1927, the school was relocated, enlarged, and called Kō'e'e Grammar School. Jean was among the first six graduates of that school, completing the eighth grade in 1928. That same year, she and her family moved to Honolulu, where she attended Punahou School. She later earned a Bachelor's degree in Economics from the University of Hawai'i.

In 1937, she married Howard Adams and had three children. Widowed since 1987, Jean is an active volunteer for a number of charitable organizations. Although she resides in Honolulu, she maintains an interest in Lāna'i and visits the island whenever possible.

Tape No. 16-1-1-88

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Jean Forbes Adams (JA)

February 21, 1988

'Āina Haina, O'ahu

BY: Mina Morita (MM)

MM: This is an interview with Jean Adams for the Kō'ele, Keōmuku oral history project on Sunday, February 21. Your interviewee is Jean Adams. The interviewer is Mina Morita.

JA: This is Jean Forbes Adams. I was born in Honolulu in April of 1916, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles N. Forbes. Mr. Forbes was a botanist at the Bishop Museum. And we lived in Kaimukī. He passed away when I was four years old, in 1920. And after his death my mother was offered a job as secretary-bookkeeper for the Lāna'i Ranch Company at Kō'ele. She was given this job by Mr. George [C.] Munro.

MM: What was your mother's name?

JA: My mother was Helen Jean [Stokes] Forbes and I was named after her. But I've always been known as Jean.

MM: And where was she from?

JA: She came up from Australia to visit her brother who also worked at the Bishop Museum. He was an ethnologist. John F. G. Stokes. And in the process of her visit to her brother, she met my father. And they were married here in Honolulu and had three children. I have an older sister Mary, and a younger brother Douglas.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

JA: . . . was before then, I don't remember. But I do remember a picture of me with leis and going to Lāna'i.

MM: After Mr. Munro offered your mom the job, you left soon after that?

JA: Yes. We left before the end of 1920, and there was a house for us at Kō'ele. And my mother and brother and I came over at that time, but my sister stayed with friends in Honolulu to finish out her first school year.

MM: And so, where did you leave from?

JA: We left from Honolulu and . . .

MM: Honolulu Harbor?

JA: Yes. Uh huh.

MM: And took a steamer?

JA: Yes. An inter-island steamer. And the rest I'm not sure of, how we got there, but I do know we motored up from Manele.

MM: By car?

JA: Mm hmm.

MM: And do you remember any first impressions when you . . .

JA: No, I don't remember. I was too young to remember any impressions at that time.

MM: Okay. But do you remember the first school you went to?

JA: Yes. It was a one-room schoolhouse [Kō'ele School], a short walk from our home. And they put me in school so that we could have fifteen children in order to get a schoolteacher. The schoolteacher lived with us because there was no other place for her to stay.

MM: What was her name?

JA: Pauline Handy was our first teacher and she had children of all ages. I was put into the first grade and I don't remember what the other children . . .

MM: You were five years old at the time?

JA: Yes. I was five years old.

MM: And what was your school day like?

JA: Scared to death, I don't know, . . .

(Laughter)

JA: . . . being in school. I had been to kindergarten here in Honolulu, but this was all very new to me and to my sister when she did come at a later time. Probably the next year. And my brother was not old enough for school at that time.

MM: So there were fifteen children in the class?

JA: Yes. Uh huh.

MM: And do you remember what the ages ranged from?

JA: Ah, well, from my age up to--I guess [Annie] Mikala [Cockett Enfield] was the oldest.

MM: Was she about sixteen?

JA: She must have been about fifteen or sixteen at that time.

MM: Uh huh. So, did you all study together or did you have . . .

JA: We were put in rows of desks by age, and the teacher would go row by row teaching. Each row, just a different subject.

MM: And could you describe the building, the schoolhouse?

JA: Well, it was a little white house with several windows around it and inside we had these desks and blackboards on the walls, the back wall with no windows. There was a flagpole out in front. And we had two little outhouses (laughs) away from the school. One for boys and one for girls.

MM: (Chuckles) Was the flagpole--you folks had to put up the flag every morning?

JA: Yes. We put the flag up every morning and learned the Pledge of Allegiance. And then we'd march into class. And that's about all I remember of that. When I was ready for the sixth grade [in 1927] we went over to the [Kō'ele Grammar] School [located near the present Cavendish Golf Course clubhouse], which was about another half mile away. And the little schoolhouse was just abandoned. [It later became the home of John and Hannah Richardson.]

MM: And when you went to the larger school, where there more classes, different classes, or were you still in one room?

JA: There were two buildings and the smaller building had two classes and the other building must have had four classes.

MM: At the bigger school, do you remember how many children were there?

JA: No, I don't remember that.

MM: But it included ranch kids as well as . . .

JA: Yeah. It was all the children from Lāna'i City as well as the ones from Kō'ele.

MM: Well, tell us something about your mom's work schedule, your mother's work schedule.

JA: Well, I don't remember what time she had to get up, but she was sort of a general bookkeeper, accountant, paymaster, storekeeper,



weatherman, postmistress, and sometimes she even had to go down and help weigh the meat at the slaughterhouse. She did all kinds of little extra jobs (laughs).

MM: So did the mail go out daily from Lāna'i?

JA: No, I don't think so. I don't remember that.

MM: Do you remember how often mail used to come up?

JA: About once a week, I think. Later on, she became postmistress of the Lāna'i City post office, too, besides her other jobs.

MM: Okay. How about when she ran the store, how did that operate?

JA: There was a bell that rang about four o'clock in the afternoon to tell the ranch people that the store was open. And they would come in and get their Saloon Pilot crackers, their raw sugar, and their canned goods, and there was a few items of clothing. Once a week the poi would come in and they would bring their bowls and scoop out the poi out of the barrels (chuckles).

MM: Where'd the poi come from?

JA: That I don't know. [The poi came from Lahaina, Maui.]

MM: And was she in charge of their allotment of meat, too? Did she have to . . .

JA: That I don't know either. I don't remember that. But there was a variety of staples. And I do remember having candy, we sold candy and cigarettes and, oh, Bull Durham tobacco and little papers that (chuckles) wrap up the cigarette. I don't remember how long the store was left open, but probably an hour or two.

MM: Did you have to help in the store, too?

JA: Yes. My sister and I frequently helped in the store. Are there any special things you want to hear about the fire that they had [in 1927]?

MM: Yeah. Uh huh.

JA: One early, early morning, we were all waked up by the bell ringing frantically because the shed that housed the cars and some of the other shops had caught fire. And . . .

MM: Where was that in relationship to the store and your house?

JA: Well, it was very close to the store and so the bucket brigade frantically watered down the side of that building, the store building, which was part of the office building, too, in order that that wouldn't burn. But the cars were destroyed and the carpenter shop and the blacksmith shop and storerooms were all destroyed in

that fire.

MM: So when did this happen? (JA laughs.) Do you remember about how old you were?

JA: Well, somewhere between eight and eleven [in 1927].

MM: Mm hmm, okay. But the bell woke up the entire community . . .

JA: Oh, yes, yes. And everybody turned out to pass the buckets of water. I don't remember where the water came from. Probably . . .

MM: The reservoir, do you think?

JA: No, that would be too far away. But in front of Mr. Munro's house was a pool that had been made out of two cisterns that they had taken [away] the division between these two water cisterns and made into a swimming pool. And that's probably where the water came from, which would be quite a distance from the fire, but there may have been another source of water closer. There must have been.

MM: Where did you get your drinking water from?

JA: I think it was from the second reservoir which . . .

MM: Is that above Hector Munro's house?

JA: Yes. Mm hmm. It wasn't that one that was in the picture that I gave you. And we filtered our water, our drinking water.

MM: Well, could you describe the ranch area and what kind of buildings were there? About how many people lived there? (JA laughs.) Well, describe your house, let's start with your house.

JA: Well, it was a wooden house that was about two feet above the ground and enclosed with slats. And it had a front porch that ran the width of the building. And it had a large room which we children slept in. There were no screens, we all had to have a mosquito net above our beds to ward off the mosquitos. And then we had this connecting bathroom with a tin bathtub, and a toilet with the water closet above and you pull the chain.

(Laughter)

JA: And we had, also facing the porch, was our living room, which actually was smaller than this bedroom that we stayed in. And then behind the living room was a dining room and a room that was separated from the dining room with a partition, which my mother used for a sewing room. And then behind that was her bedroom. And behind the dining room was the kitchen. And then there was a back porch that was--the bathroom opened on and the kitchen opened on this back porch. And then off to the side was a little house that was a laundry room and a screened place where we kept meat and milk

because we did not have refrigeration.

In the kitchen we had a wood stove and a smaller kerosene stove. And, let's see, in our backyard behind the laundry area, we had an enclosed, unroofed area where a lady named Lily boiled our clothes. And off on the other side we had a big chicken coop so we had our own eggs and chickens. Then that backyard was fenced and behind the fence was the camp. I think our whole yard was fenced. And, let's see, from the front porch we had a cement walk that went over to a building. That was the office and store. So we were fairly close. My mother could just walk over there.

MM: And then the path continued and I think it turns left and you go over to the Munros'?

JA: Yeah. Although all that front, we had a fence. It did not have a fence when I went over there couple years ago. Yeah, we had fence all the way around our house.

MM: And so, I know you got your meats from the ranch.

JA: Mm hmm.

MM: And how about your other food? Did you have a vegetable garden?

JA: No. We shared the Munros' vegetable garden. [Eizo] Abe took care of that, the vegetables. We had quite a good variety of vegetables.

MM: Who was Abe, now?

JA: Abe was kind of a handyman for the Munros. He chopped wood for them, he sawed big pieces of wood for the wooden stoves and the fireplace, and brought wood over for us. And we did have a chopping block if we wanted to cut it up smaller. And he took care of small carpentry and the [Munros'] vegetable garden. We took care of our garden. I don't know whether Mother had somebody to come in and help with that, 'cause goodness knows she didn't have time. We kids used to do the weeding, though. (Chuckles) I remember doing that.

MM: With your mother working, so you had someone coming in . . .

JA: Yes. And she'd give us a nickel a bucket for a bucket of weeds (laughs).

MM: And so you had someone named Lily to do the laundry . . .

JA: Yes. And we had another one, Anna Shin, did the cooking for us and sometimes watched us kids. So I don't remember--my sister [Mary] must have come over in 1921 and then she went to school with us. It may have been after the first term. She went to Hanahau'oli here in Honolulu until she had finished a certain term.

MM: How about things like milk or butter?

- JA: [Mr.] Bon Soon Shin was the milkman. He used to bring a bucket of milk every day or so. The Munros made butter and sometimes we kids would help churn that butter. We'd sit there and crank the old wooden churn.
- MM: Uh huh. So it was whenever you made it, or did you have to do it on a regular schedule?
- JA: I don't remember that, but she used to skim off--she had a milk separator so that she got cream with the butter and I think our milk was separated before we got--no, I guess it was raw milk.
- MM: And you kept chickens?
- JA: Yeah.
- MM: So you got eggs from the chickens?
- JA: Mm hmm. Eggs and meat.
- MM: So the whole time you were living in the ranch area, was there any electricity?
- JA: The Munros had an electric generator that they would--one of the--Abe, I guess, started the generator about four o'clock in the afternoon and would give us light, I guess, until about ten o'clock or so at night. Maybe it was all night. I don't remember that part. But we did have a generator that provided us with, I guess, the essentials. But we always kept a kerosene lantern in case, you know, we didn't have the generator. Like I said, we had no refrigeration. I think once in a while they would bring over ice from Maui, and ice cream. So ice cream was a very special treat.
- (Laughter)
- MM: And you'd make your own ice cream. I mean, they would. . . . No, no . . .
- JA: No, they would bring it over with the ice. And we did have an icebox where we could store the ice for a certain length of time, but it would melt. We didn't get it often enough to really do much good as far as keeping butter or anything like that. We had to put those all out in this cooler out in the back.
- MM: And the cooler had a cement floor or something?
- JA: Mm hmm, mm hmm [yes]. And a shelf and some hooks to hang meat on and it was screened so it was protected.
- MM: But it got pretty cool at night, too, so that helped?
- JA: Yeah, I don't think we had too much spoilage. I really don't remember that.

MM: Did someone bake bread on a regular basis?

JA: Yes. Anna [Shin] baked the bread. And we always had a stockpot on the back of the stove because it was cool enough to have vegetable soup, vegetable beef soup every night. And, let's see, I guess we usually had meat. And maybe on Sundays we'd have something like macaroni and cheese or scrambled eggs, that sort of thing.

MM: Was there a church in the area?

JA: No church. [Ka Lōkahi O Ka Mālamalama Ho'omana Na'auao O Hawai'i Church in Kō'ele was built in 1930, after the Forbes family left Lāna'i.]

MM: Did you have services or anything like that?

JA: No. No. I didn't go to Sunday school until we moved back to Honolulu.

MM: So what did you and your brother and sister do for recreation?

JA: (Laughs) Oh, a lot of the things we made our own fun. We climbed trees, and played tag and cowboys and Indians, and what were some of the other games that children play. And we went hiking and just played (laughs).

MM: You had mentioned at one time, you went riding with the Munros to Mānele.

JA: Yes. When I got older, I guess I was about ten, I would get Ruby Munro to go and get couple of the ranch horses and go riding. I always enjoyed that. But prior to that I got used to horses with the Lāna'i City manager's [i.e., Lāna'i Plantation superintendent Harold Blomfield-Brown] daughter [Bertha], who was about my sister's and my age. She had a pony and we would ride that. Once a week we'd go over to her house and once a week she'd come over to our house. So she would ride her pony over and we'd take turns. That was her pet. Our pet was a dog and the dog hated the pony and would chase it around (chuckles) our yard.

MM: So, did you get to play with any other of the ranch kids?

JA: Oh, yes, yes. We played with Fumiko, who lived right next door to us.

MM: Fumiko Abe [Watanabe].

JA: Yes. Fumiko Abe. And, of course, we saw the other kids at school. We weren't supposed to go into the camp for some reason. That was Mr. Munro's rule. But I'd sneak over quite frequently (chuckles) to find my friends.

MM: Uh huh. And did you ever get to go and watch the cowboys work or anything like that?

JA: Yes. I would sneak over and watch them work. I would watch them branding and castrating the steers. But I was thoroughly scolded when I was found out (laughs).

MM: By Mr. Munro?

JA: Yes. And my mother. Just not supposed to go. I suppose they thought I'd get in the way or get hurt. But I used to also sneak down to the slaughterhouse and get sick watching them kill (laughs) the steer.

MM: And the slaughterhouse was located where?

JA: Oh, let's see. You want to turn that off and I'll show you on the map.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

JA: The slaughterhouse was not too far from our home.

MM: It was below the corrals or the . . .

JA: Yes. Yes, it was below--not quite a distance from the corrals and the pigpens were there, too, right behind the slaughterhouse. I think they also had a milking shed down in the same area, although I'm not positive.

MM: So, let me see, do you remember any of the cowboys . . .

JA: Oh, I remember Abraham because he used to tease me. He used to call me a German.

MM: That's Abraham Kauila?

JA: Yes. Abraham Kauila.

MM: Wasn't he a policeman, too?

JA: Well, he may have been after we left, but--and his father, I remember his father. Was his father's name James?

MM: James.

JA: James Kauila. And course, I remember [Simeon] Kauakahi.

MM: Kauakahi was the saddlemaker?

JA: Yes, uh huh. I remember not too much by names like I said already--I only remember Pili [Kahoohalahala] because he was such a musician.

MM: Do you remember some of the other--there's some of the Korean workers, right?

JA: Yes. I remember [Gi Hong] Kwon and [Bon Soon] Shin and that was about the only ones. I remember, you know, more the kids rather than the adults. [Sam] Koa was a cowboy and he also drove a truck. And he probably helped to round up the cattle and take them down to Mānele for shipping to Honolulu. And that was always kind of exciting with the . . .

MM: Did you ever watch them load up the cattle?

JA: Yes, uh huh. Oh, yes. They put the chute down onto the deck of the ship, and the ship would be going [i.e., bobbing] up and down, and the cattle would be bawling their heads off, and they'd have to be prodded to go down this chute to get onto the deck of the ship.

MM: Okay. That was from off of the cliff, right?

JA: Yes, uh huh.

MM: With this chute coming out. And was the water ever real rough or was . . .

JA: Yes. Usually was bouncing around--the ship was, you know (laughs).

MM: And was it an event that everyone went down to watch or was it a special time or . . .

JA: Yeah, it was kind of special. I don't know how often they rounded up the cattle to ship to Honolulu, but it was quite exciting. But I don't remember going too often. But enough so that I do remember them doing that. We did kind of hate that ride down to Mānele, it was so rough. But every now and again the Munros would plan a picnic and we--all the gang--would go down to the beach there and have a picnic among the kiawe bushes, the trees. And the water, for me as a child, it was quite rough. We'd have to watch the breakers as they came and they'd catch us and roll us into shore.

MM: And this is on the white sand area?

JA: You call it Hulopo'e now, huh?

MM: Hulopo'e.

JA: Yes. Well, I never remember that name. It was always Mānele. Yeah, it was quite a long, tedious ride over the rough road that it was then. It's much improved now.

MM: Did you ever see them load the cattle from the beach side?

JA: No. No.

MM: From the beach to the boat?

JA: No. I've seen that on Kawaihae on the Big Island but I never saw



that on Lāna'i.

MM: Yeah, yeah, okay. Let's see, do you remember--I know the ranch had some facilities at the beach--do you remember what buildings were down there or . . .

JA: Just kind of a little dressing-room shack. They didn't have any other buildings there.

MM: You don't remember any bunkhouses or anything like that?

JA: No, I don't remember that.

MM: Okay. How about the salt pans?

JA: That I don't remember at all. (Chuckles)

MM: Let's see. Let me think now.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

MM: Okay. I know when you were living on Lāna'i, during that time, Lāna'i City was being built.

JA: Yes. They started in '22, 1922.

MM: Just when you moved there, right?

JA: Oh, we had moved in 1920.

MM: Oh, okay.

JA: So we were there about two years before the [Hawaiian] Pineapple Company bought the island. Prior to that it belonged to the Baldwin family.

MM: So you saw the change from the ranch being . . .

JA: The only thing on the island.

MM: . . . the only thing to Lāna'i City being built. Can you tell us about any changes you saw or how you saw the city being built?

JA: Well, not really, it just kind of sprung up. And, of course, there were more people. Then they had to build the [Kō'ele Grammar] School [which opened in 1927] which the children from Kō'ele went over to that school. And new teachers were brought in, they had to build a cottage for these new teachers. Because prior to that, the teacher at [the old] Kō'ele School stayed with us. It was just a gradual process. I do remember at night hearing the tractors going to start the pineapple fields. I remember that quite clearly. All night long, they would plow and prepare the land for the pineapples.



MM: So did you see any impact on the ranch while the pineapple was coming up?

JA: Well, the ranch continued operating to provide meat for the Lāna'i City people. There was also sheep, which we had a lot of mutton and leg of lamb. That's where I learned to love leg of lamb. (Chuckles)

MM: How about goat, did you have goat also?

JA: I think there were goats on Lāna'i, but I don't remember ever eating goat. We had wild turkeys that they would get from the Ka'a area. That was always interesting, the story of how they caught the wild turkeys. They would go out at night with a gunnysack and shine a light in the turkey's eyes as they were roosting on the little branches, and just grab them by the feet and throw them into the gunnysack. (Chuckles) That was an area that always fascinated me. We always loved to go and visit the Garden of the Gods. It was always kind of spooky and interesting. And we'd go out there also to gather poha berries. There was . . .

MM: Lot of bushes.

JA: Yeah. I think that was probably what the turkeys were living on, these pohas.

MM: So did you get out in that area by car or . . .

JA: Yes. By Model-T Ford. It was the kind of cars we had in those days. One of the things we children enjoyed was, somebody took my mother out to teach her to drive a Model-T car and she would go all over those empty fields jerking, and we would be in the backseat laughing at her (laughs).

MM: And there was no roads?

JA: No roads. Well, there was just rough dirt road all out that area. But she had a lot of space to learn to operate this Model-T Ford with its three pedals and a little spark plug that was operated some way. And these cars usually had to be cranked in order to make the engine go. These fields where she'd learn to drive were also, after a rain, full of mushrooms, and we would all gather mushrooms out of this same field.

MM: Were there many cars on Lāna'i?

JA: No. I think just the ranch and then later on when the pineapple company started, they had the cars, too. I don't think there were too many cars there. I don't remember just how many. Of course, they had to get new ones after the two or three burned in the big fire. But they were also Model-T's. I don't think they had any Model-A's. (Chuckles)

MM: So, none of the cars were owned by the workers?

JA: No.

MM: They were just owned just by the ranch itself.

JA: Mm hmm, mm hmm [yes]. Actually, we managed to get around, but I don't remember anyone driving but the older Munros until my mother learned. (Laughs)

MM: Someone had mentioned to me that the ranch was separate from the city, and every night Mr. Munro locked up the gates?

JA: That I don't remember.

MM: Okay.

JA: He may have. I know there were gates, lots of gates on the way out, just kind of separate the cattle from the pineapple fields.

MM: I see.

JA: Yes, I remember because my brother was either opening or shutting a gate and it swung back on him and he lost his two front teeth. (Laughs) Luckily, they were his baby teeth. But we called him "Toothless" for a long time. (Chuckles)

MM: So when you were there---I mean, the population was pretty small when you first moved there.

JA: Yes.

MM: And then you saw Lāna'i City coming up and a lot of new workers coming in.

JA: Yes, uh huh.

MM: So was there any significant changes?

JA: Well, prior to that time, I don't believe we had any Filipino people. We did have very few Japanese, but there was lots of Japanese people that came to work [for the pineapple company]. Japanese and Filipinos. I don't remember any Chinese workers. We had a Chinese accountant with the pineapple company. I think that's what the population was. Just mostly Japanese and Filipino. And, of course, in the ranch it was mostly Hawaiian.

MM: Mm\_hmm, right. How about Keōmuku? Did you ever get to go to Keōmuku?

JA: I was always too young to make the trip to Keōmuku. None of the Forbes' kids got down there. (Chuckles)

MM: Was it a rough trip or . . .

JA: I really don't know because my mother, I think, went there once on horseback. I don't believe she enjoyed that.

(Laughter)

JA: She wasn't too much of a horsewoman. I'm trying to think of some of the other things that might be of interest.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

MM: Can you tell me a little bit of different people that lived in the ranch area?

JA: Well, towards the back of the ranch was Henry Gibson's house.

MM: Right. And so he worked for the ranch?

JA: Yes. I guess he was one of the cowboys or one of the bosses. Then along---I guess in one of these houses was [Morikazu] Kawano's house. And he was kind of a general---he wasn't a cowboy. Maybe he was more of a mechanic, took care of the machinery. But I'm not positive of that. And then there was Kauakahi's house back here and he was married to Herbert Rennie's mother. And Herbert Rennie, as I recall, wasn't with the ranch. Although he may have been for a while, but he had a job with the Hawaiian Pineapple Company [as harbor superintendent].

MM: Kauakahi was from Ni'ihau, right?

JA: Yes. Kauakahi is from Ni'ihau and had the special kind of a [Hawaiian] language. He would pronounce K's as T. (Chuckles)

MM: Did the other Hawaiians understand him?

JA: Oh, yeah, we all understood him.

(Laughter)

JA: Yeah, he was a nice guy. And . . .

MM: And he was a saddlemaker?

JA: Yes, uh huh. He did beautiful leather tooling, designing on leather.

MM: So besides saddle, he made other things, too?

JA: Yeah, mm hmm. He made a nice tote bag for my mother. I was trying to think who did beautiful lau hala work. I guess that was more the wives of the cowboys would make hats and matting, lau hala mats. I'm not sure who did that. And like I said, Anna Shin worked for us as a maid and cook.

MM: And her husband [Bon Soon Shin] . . .

JA: Was the milkman and I guess he did some cowboy work, too. [Gi Hong] Kwon, I'm not sure whether he was a cowboy or whether he had some special job. I don't know about some of these others.

MM: Let's see, there was another--Henry Kano who worked with the piggery.

JA: Yeah, maybe he took care of the pigs and fed them. I'm not sure about him.

MM: Do you remember Fujimoto?

(JA and MM are examining a list of names associated with the ranch.)

JA: No. I don't really remember those people. I don't remember Frank Anderson.

MM: How about Jimmy Lalawai?

JA: Are you sure that's the spelling of Nama'u? Are you sure it wasn't A-U-U?

MM: That could be it. I just wrote it down how I heard it.

JA: Uh huh. I don't remember Jimmy Lalawai. I remember the name Johnny Nakihei but his face isn't. . . . I see you have Annie [Shin], we always call her Anna. And you have Kwon as a cowboy. James [Kauila] was a ranch foreman. Didn't he mostly live down at Keomuku or did he just go down there? (Kauila lived in the Ko'ele camp. [Toyoki] Morita lived at Keomuku.)

MM: That Morita . . .

JA: Yeah.

MM: . . . I'm not sure. I'm not sure. From some other people have told me that he worked with Mr. Munro planting trees mostly.

JA: Oh, yeah, could be. I remember they lived right next to where we were in one of these little houses there. Uh huh, oh, you have all this. Yeah, this was all burned.

MM: After they had that fire, did they rebuild. . .

JA: Well, they rebuilt it.

MM: . . . quickly?

JA: Yes, uh huh.

MM: Where'd they get their wood from? They have to bring it . . .

JA: They had to bring that in by boat. Let's see . . .

MM: It seems that your family was very close to Mr. [George C.] Munro.

JA: Oh, we were.

MM: Could you tell me about him?

JA: Well, the younger [Munro] girls used to baby-sit us as kids. But they were mostly staying down here in Honolulu so that they could go to Punahou School and would just come up to Lana'i for vacations. And we are still very close to the Munro family. All their children, George Munro family, they're all gone except Ruby Munro. And she's in her eighties now. Ruth [Ruby's niece], who grew up on Lana'i, lives with Ruby Munro. She never married. Neither Ruby nor Ruth married. Several of them have passed away within the last two years. James, the only son, passed away quite a number of years ago. And then Georgie [Georgina Meyer], and then Jeannie [Towill] and her husband died in '87, as well as Rena Fankhauser, she also passed away in '87. So that was the [four] girls. There were [five children], and only Ruby is left. So let's see, what else is there?

MM: Could you tell us about Mr. Munro, what he was like?

JA: Well, he claims that my father, [who] was a botanist, got him interested in plants. And that in looking up things, I found out that my father had been on Lana'i in 1917 and recommended the planting of eucalyptus as a windbreak and Norfolk pines as a means of bringing water through the roots into the soil and building up the water supply.

Mr. Munro ran the camp with a strict hand. But he was a very kind man.

MM: Did he speak Hawaiian, too?

JA: He spoke Hawaiian fluently. He was very interested in birds. He had a little room that always fascinated me as a child because he did his own taxidermy and had a number of stuffed birds in this little house. And I think he kept a record of when plover and other birds came to Lana'i.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

MM: So you were saying about Mr. Munro, yeah?

JA: Yeah. (Chuckles) I was always a bit in awe of Mr. Munro even though I liked him and I would say he was a kind man, but he could be strict. One day I was naughty and broke off the top of a Norfolk

pine so I had to go and apologize to him and that was very difficult. Because it seems that if you break off the top of a Norfolk pine, it stunts the tree, the growth of the tree.

And another time he had taken several of us--I guess my brother, sister and I--for a ride way down--to check on something way below where Lāna'i City is--and this was before Lāna'i City was built, and it was quite a distance off from Kō'e'ele. And we passed this fenced-in place where they had the bull, prize bull, and I was always frightened of this bull. He was a great big fellow. So when we went way down, Mr. Munro told us to stay in the car while he checked on something. So I got out of the car and walked around. When he came back, he left me there. So I started walking home, but when I came to this fenced place with the bull, I wouldn't go past the fence. And I just sat there. In fact, I walked away from where the bull was and sat down. I suppose I cried because quite a long time later, Mr. Munro came back to pick me up (laughs). And I had learned my lesson.

MM: But you did a lot with that family?

JA: Yes, uh huh. Mrs. [Jean] Munro was kind of a social person who would get the group of people together for picnics at Manele, or Christmas at her house, Thanksgiving. One Thanksgiving that I remember--the turkey was just being carried in for carving when we had this earthquake. And here was the person holding the platter of turkey bouncing around with the turkey. And everybody was afraid the turkey was going to fall on the floor, but it didn't.

(Laughter)

JA: That's all I remember of that Thanksgiving (laughs).

MM: About how old were you at that time?

JA: That I don't remember, but I must have been very impressed.

(Laughter)

MM: The whole house shook?

JA: Oh, yes. It was quite a severe earthquake as I remember. Another scary thing that happened on Lāna'i was a tidal wave during the building of Kaunapali Harbor. They were building the breakwater and they had a small locomotive that with the tracks ran out to the end so they could carry boulders out to build up the breakwater. And this tidal wave came and later, we went down to see what damage had been done. And the tracks were twisted in knots and the locomotive was on its side. Ever since then, I've been very frightened of tidal waves.

MM: Mm hmm. I'm sure we all are. But was anyone injured or . . .

JA: No one was injured, it was just this damage because no homes were knocked down where the harbor was. (The homes were built on higher ground so they were not damaged.) And it created . . .

MM: There was no one working at that time?

JA: No. Because I believe that tidal wave came during the middle of the night at a time when there was nobody down there.

MM: Yeah. Yeah. So you were probably about, what, ten years old?

JA: Well, under eleven anyway, 'cause that's when we came back from Honolulu. After I was eleven. Did you want to hear anything about our graduation from the eighth grade (laughs)?

MM: Oh, yes.

JA: Oh, I think there were six of us [in 1928]. And it was the first class to graduate from [Kō'ele Grammar] School, so we had a big ceremony down at the one and only theater. We had chairs set up on the platform and I, of course, don't remember any of the ceremony. But we had these lovely leis, leis you don't often see anymore. Violet leis, 'akulikuli. Rose leis, all made in a style where you don't have the lei connected. We just--it was very . . .

MM: This is the first graduating class?

JA: Yes.

MM: And you were in it?

JA: Yes. My sister was also in it because she had been held back by having appendicitis sometime during our school years and she had lost quite a bit of schooling and so she was put back. However, when we came to Honolulu, I repeated the eighth grade which was just as well, because I was already rather young and she went off to the ninth grade, which was fine.

MM: So right after you had graduated from [Kō'ele Grammar] School, then your family moved back to O'ahu.

JA: Yes. Because at that time there was no high school there [on Lāna'i] and no plans for a high school. So I don't know what the other children, whether they just didn't go on with schooling or whether they also went somewhere else.

MM: I think that most of them, at that time, most of them had to leave the island if they wanted to . . .

JA: I think that's probably what happened.

MM: And Ian mentioned to me that you also had to go off island for your regular dentist and doctor appointments.



JA: Yes, until the pineapple company had built a hospital and brought in a doctor and a nurse, we had to go over to Lahaina. Go to their clinic and their doctors. So when my sister had appendicitis, they had to take her over by launch, you know, special trip. She was very ill and they operated immediately. Then they thought that she might be getting TB, so she spent quite a few months at Kula Sanatorium until she was declared safe and over her TB. I don't know exactly how long she was away from home.

MM: So when she was away from home, was your mother still on Lāna'i?

JA: Oh, yes. Uh huh.

MM: So how was she taken care of, how was your sister taken care of?

JA: Well, in the hospital. My mother, I guess, stayed with her a while, then came back to take care of the rest of us, my brother and I, and her job. I'm very hazy about all of that part. I just do remember her being placed on the launch on a mattress. I think they were being very careful not to drop her.

MM: So she had to make the trip to Mānele and . . .

JA: Well, this was to Kaumalapau so it was after that harbor had been built.

MM: Oh, I see. So after the harbor was built, did they take cattle to the harbor, then?

JA: No. I think they still used Mānele and the chute (chuckles).

MM: Might have been easier.

JA: Probably, since that was all built there. Yeah, Kaumalapau was strictly for pineapple shipping.

MM: So, I know your mother was a bookkeeper and when she first moved there, there wasn't any bank, right?

JA: I think she was the banker, too. (Chuckles)

MM: Okay, so, then after they built Lāna'i City, then the bank opened.

JA: Yes. It was the--what's now the First Hawaiian. But it was Bishop Bank then. And they sent--first it was Mr. [William S.] Cooper, whose wife [Kate W. Cooper] is in this picture, is a teacher. And then [in 1930] it was Arthur [W.] Carlson. And there may have been another one at that time. I only remember Mr. Cooper and Mr. Carlson.

MM: So did that change your mother's job at all?

JA: That I don't know. She did some banking with a bank over in Lahaina. I remember having a first savings account over there



before there was any bank on Lāna'i. I think it was a Bank of Hawai'i and that building is still there, but it's used as a shop last time I was down there in Lahaina several years ago. Our dentist was in Wailuku, so we'd have to take that long trip from Lahaina to Wailuku. And at that time, it was a long trip, half a day's trip.

MM: It's still a long trip.

(Laughter)

MM: So then, you returned to O'ahu to continue your school. Did you have to make any special adjustments or how would you compare Lāna'i to O'ahu?

JA: Well, the children at Punahou were mostly Caucasian, practically all Caucasian at that time. Now it's much more diversified. On Lāna'i, my sister, brother and I were the only Caucasians in the school (laughs). But that didn't seem to make any difference to us as children, I mean, we were just all kids together.

MM: Uh huh, uh huh. But was it real hard for you to make an adjustment?

JA: It was. It was very new to me and I was a shy child anyway, so it was quite an adjustment. I think it was more so for my sister because she used to frequently be sick on the way to school. Nervous illness.

MM: When you moved back to O'ahu, where did you live?

JA: We lived in Kāhala. My mother bought a home there. We stayed there until, let's see, until I was married, stayed at Kāhala. And then a few years later, her lease ran out so she moved and sold the house.

MM: And I guess at that time, Kāhala wasn't built up or anything so it was pretty country?

JA: Behind our home on Kāhala Road, there was no 'Aukai Street until much later. It was a kiawe forest. And over on Farmers Road, it was pig and chicken farms.

MM: And how did you get to school? By car?

JA: Well, there was a friend that lived at Black Point that used to take us to school and we'd take the streetcar home as far as Kaimukī. And then there was a small jitney bus that would take us from the end of the car line in Kaimukī to Kāhala. And it went from Kaimukī around Diamond Head over to the end of the car line in Waikīkī. So we would gauge whether we wanted to catch the bus at Waikīkī or Kaimukī and that was the streetcar we'd take.

(Laughter)

JA: We had a choice.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

MM: After your mother left Lāna'i, did she happen to go back at any time to visit?

JA: No. But my sister and I went back and spent a few weeks with Bertha Blomfield-Brown 'cause we were very good friends. I'm not sure, we probably only spent about a week. I don't remember how long. I was twelve, then. But, no, Mother never went back. And I never went for fifty-seven years after that, I think. (Laughs) So really, it was kind of fun to take my husband and show him where we lived. 'Cause I was really surprised to see the family home still standing after all those years. And, of course, I was glad that they hadn't destroyed the large Norfolk pine which grew next to the Munro's dining room. And we did drive down, tried to get to Shipwreck Beach, but the road was too bad to get there. I had never been there. And there were a few buildings that I recognized in Lāna'i City. The biggest change was the size of the trees, which after fifty-seven years, you can imagine, were really big old things. And--anything else?

MM: Well, let me see, maybe you can tell us something about--we might be able to use this in later research--about Mr. [Harold] Blomfield-Brown, the first plantation [superintendent].

JA: Oh, yes. Well, he was very particular that Lāna'i City was just spic-and-span. And if he saw you walking along and there was a piece of paper or rubbish on the side of the road, he would stop his car and ask you to pick it up and throw it away. (Laughs) And he lived at the top of the hill there and it kind of overlooked Lāna'i City. And his home was available for visiting Hawaiian Pineapple people. And he always entertained beautifully. His furnishings were really lovely. Beautiful Persian rugs and he had a set of china that had belonged to English royalty that had come down to him through his family.

MM: Where was he from, originally?

JA: That I don't know, but he acted very English. He always wore--what do you call these knickers, not knickers but . . .

MM: They look like riding pants?

JA: Riding pants and boots, and his boots had to be shined every day to a glossy, mirror finish. He had a special little room just for somebody to shine his shoes. (Laughs) And they had a room for the daughter 'cause the mother, Mrs. Brown, tutored her daughter until she came down here for Punahou where she boarded. And we used to love to go over there. She had a closet full of beautiful toys and their cook, mid-morning, served us cookies and juice. And she had her own pony, which we were . . .

MM: Do you remember the cook's name?

JA: Might have been Takahashi. But I'm not sure. Does that sound familiar?

MM: No, I have no idea.

JA: No. But they had a yardman named Kokubun, which I always thought was an odd name, but it's a Japanese name.

MM: Japanese, uh huh.

JA: And they had ducks and chickens, and a big vegetable garden and a big flower garden in the back of their home. And a big servants' quarters. And then they had a stable for their horses. Mr. and Mrs. Brown each had their own horse. And they had a cow or two with a stable for the cow. And a large pasture for the pony. And let's see, what else did they have up there? I know it was quite an interesting estate, you might call it. Down below the house was a pool and tennis courts that were available for the big shots (chuckles). And then all the bosses' homes were built along sort of that little rise there back of Lana'i City. Let's see, what else about the Browns. Mrs. Brown's mother lived with them, Mrs. Dickey, who was a nice lady. And it must have been six bedrooms and about four baths in that house. Is that what it is now, do you remember?

MM: I know it's a large house, but I can't remember how many bedrooms had.

JA: And then, let's see, on the kitchen side was this big nursery and then Mr. Brown had his little den here. And over here was a big dining room and a big kitchen and a big storage room, pantry. Oh, and then they had a huge porch across the front by the entrance there.

MM: Oh, I know. I had forgotten. When Lana'i City was built up, and I guess they had stores built and things, did the ranch stop selling things at their store? And did people go to Lana'i City to buy things?

JA: I'm not sure about that. Because in our store we had just the staples that the Hawaiians like, like corned beef and, oh, salmon. I think they would also bring in barrels of salt salmon so they could have lomi salmon and poi. And then we had these large bins with crackers and rice and raw sugar. We didn't have the refined sugar. And there were all these little knickknacks like work shirts and pants, and not too much of that. My mother did a lot of importing from Sears and Montgomery Ward's for our clothes and other things that we needed rather than depend on either the store in Lana'i City or our own store. And I think she would also order for . . .

MM: For the workers?

JA: . . . for the workers, if they wanted her to. And occasionally when we went over to Lahaina, we would get other things there. There was the Okamoto Store [in Lana'i City]. I think it was Okamoto.

MM: I think that's what it was called.

JA: Yeah. And then there was another store that was just clothing. It was across--you know that big center park . . .

MM: Okamoto Grocery Store . . .

JA: Yeah.

MM: . . . and there was Yet Lung?

JA: Was that on this side, this other side?

MM: I'm not sure. Someone just gave me this name and I was going to check on it.

JA: Well, over on this side, I know there was a barbershop that we went to once in a while. And a clothing store here. I don't remember the name of it. But on this side was this big Okamoto Store with a butcher shop and that had most of the stuff for the pineapple workers. They would get dry goods and they'd have dishes, pots and pans, and that sort of thing, too. It was a general store. We went into that store. It wasn't Okamoto Store anymore, I don't think.

MM: No, no. It's changed owner since. I think, if I'm not mistaken, it's Pine Isle Market?

JA: Oh, I don't know. There was some other little stores in there, too.

MM: And you mentioned that the Munros and your mother entertained at the clubhouse?

JA: Once in a while, yes. Uh huh. My mother didn't but the Munros--the Munros entertained but it was mostly at their own home 'cause it was large.

MM: I see.

JA: But other people, like Mrs. [David E.] Root, would have a party down there. And then the [Carlisle P.] Sutherlands had a little daughter and they'd go there once in a while for a birthday party or something of that sort.

And both my sister and brother had their tonsils out at the Lāna'i Hospital. Dr. [Robert D.] Millard. (Chuckles) His nurse stood by and they removed their tonsils. I had to have mine done earlier when I was down here visiting a relative. Oh, and another time I went to the hospital myself was, you know, we were always told, "Don't touch the carpenter's tools." Well, I touched the big knife that they shaved shingles with and I cut my wrist. So I had to be rushed down there

to have my wrist sewn up (chuckles). I still have the cut scar.

MM: Oh, my goodness. It was a critical one. You cut your vein open.

JA: Yeah. Just missed the artery by a hair. (Sighs) I was always doing things like that (chuckles).

MM: Let's see. I know you mentioned Mr. and Mrs. [David E.] Root. And he was with Hawaiian Pine?

JA: Yes. But I'm not sure what he did. [David E. Root was engineer in charge of construction for Hawaiian Pineapple Company.]

MM: Okay. And . . .

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

MM: After Lāna'i City was built, was your family involved in more community activities there or . . .

JA: Well, we would go down--then we had movies once a week and we would go down to see the movie of the week. And once in a while the Japanese would put on a play and we'd always go down and watch that.

MM: Was it in Japanese?

JA: Yes.

(Laughter)

JA: And--well, like I had mentioned my mother--and I don't know how often she did go down there and run the post office back in that office building that was built in Lāna'i City.

MM: And that's the present building now?

JA: I don't remember. Must be bigger now. It was just a small . . .

MM: Well, it's been the same size since I was a little girl (chuckles).

JA: Oh, really?

MM: Uh huh.

JA: Well, I just remember the post office part. And she would do her banking after the bank was built there.

MM: Do you remember any other events that happened? I know you mentioned there was an earthquake, and there was a tidal wave, and about the fire that happened. Do you remember anything else that . . .

JA: The arrival of the first airplanes.

MM: Oh, really?

JA: Yes. They were military planes. There was two, three, or four of them. And they landed in this field just below Kō'ele.

MM: By the old school?

JA: No, no. No, no. The old school---wait a minute. The old school was way over here. But they landed on this field down here, way below the . . .

MM: Below the slaughterhouse?

JA: . . . slaughterhouse. But we were in school, in this old school [i.e., Kō'ele School], and we were all so excited about airplanes landing on Lana'i that we didn't care what the teacher said. We just rushed out and all ran down to see what was happening. And, of course, these aviators made a big deal out of all us kids (laughs). Somewhere there's a picture of these planes, you know, with the two wings? The old-style planes.

MM: Why did they land, do you know?

JA: I have no idea.

MM: And there were four planes?

JA: There were either three or four. There were more than one plane. They circled and they all lined up in a row there. I guess they were quite interested in us kids all--our excitement over them being there. Yes, that was a big event (laughs).

MM: And they landed in the field?

JA: Yes, uh huh. It was a level field.

MM: Were there more people from the town that came out to see them?

JA: Oh, there must have been. After seeing them I don't remember what happened.

(Laughter)

JA: It was just that that event stuck in my mind.

MM: How about Dr. [Kenneth] Emory's visits?

JA: Well, I remember him as a young man coming up there and coming to some of the social things and talking to my mother. I remember that. I remember a group of the higher-ups in Hawaiian Pine coming to visit Lana'i, and a big party given to them over at the Lana'i City clubhouse. It was James Dole and--I guess they all stayed up in the Brown's place. But there must have been other people taking

them in because there was quite a group of them.

MM: And was this when the pineapple was first harvested or first planted?

JA: Well, it must have been maybe the first harvest because things were built up when they came. Oh, I remember a Mr. White, who was, I think, treasurer of the pineapple company. Clarence White. And there was a brother, too. I remember I was selling some tickets for the school thing and I was impressed because Mr. White bought some tickets from me (laughs). I can't remember any other big thing happening.

MM: Was the ranch kept pretty separate from the . . .

JA: Lāna'i City?

MM: Lāna'i City.

JA: Yes. Mm hmm.

MM: Except for school?

JA: Yes, except for the school. Now, I remember at Christmastime, the cowboys would come and sing for us. And I just loved that. And after we moved to Kāhala, groups of Hawaiians would come maybe the first one or two years after we moved here, and then they gradually gave that practice up. I guess, maybe there got to be too many houses or whatever. And I can remember a party or two--maybe they were luaus back in the camp, that we went to. And I remember Koa's funeral. I think I told you about that.

MM: Maybe you can describe it for us.

JA: Well, he was laid out in the front room of his house with flowers all over his coffin, which I believe was a closed coffin. And I remember taking a little bunch of flowers from our garden over and putting it on his coffin. And I don't remember a service. I probably wasn't there for the service. And then we had a little cemetery up on a knoll which--I don't know whether it was the same cemetery I saw three years ago or--because there was so many trees. At the time we were there, there were no trees around the cemetery. But now the cem-- . . .

MM: Yeah. The one you saw was quite different. The one, I think they call the Old Hawaiian Graveyard, the road is pretty rough going up there. You know, and I think the one you went to, the road was paved?

JA: No, I don't believe so. I think it was just a dirt road.

MM: But there were lots of graves there?



JA: Yeah. Mm hmm.

MM: Yeah. Well, I think . . .

JA: But why would they have two graveyards?

MM: One's the old one and one's the new one (laughs).

JA: Oh, uh huh. Well, I wanted to go and read some of the markers, but my husband wanted to move on and see something else. And so I didn't do that. Maybe when I go with you, I'll do that.

MM: Okay. But how did Koa die?

JA: That I don't remember. Whether he got pneumonia or just what. It wasn't an accident.

MM: 'Cause he wasn't that old.

JA: No. No.

MM: Do you remember how people were dressed for the occasion or . . .

JA: No, I don't remember that making any impression (laughs) on me as a kid.

MM: Do you know if they had to have like a coffin shipped from Maui or did someone . . .

JA: No, they built their own.

MM: Built over there?

JA: There was no embalming or anything like that, of course. There was no person that did that, as far as I knew. And I don't remember what sort of ceremony or anything they had for Wilson Kwon when he was drowned. I remember them getting a poi barrel and trying to revive him after he had fallen into the reservoir.

MM: A poi barrel?

JA: You know, a regular barrel and they rolled him over it. They didn't have regular resuscitation at that time. They didn't know about that. So, to get the water out of him, they tried to just roll him over this barrel to get the water out of him.

MM: I see. I see.

JA: But it didn't work.

MM: Which reservoir was that?

JA: The one right behind our house. And he and some of his friends were



playing. There was a kind of a little platform and I don't know why they were playing. But there was a fence around the place, but they had crawled over the fence and was playing there and he had somehow fallen in. And none of the kids knew how to swim.

I learned how to swim in the Munro's converted cistern and it was real deep. (Chuckles) You know, having been a cistern. Using water wings, which you don't see anymore. Do you know what water wings are?

MM: Are those the---I know the water wings I had for my kids were plastic tubes that you blow up.

JA: No. No. This was a--you had the blower in the center and it came out with things that blew little floats that blew up. You had to wet the--it was kind of a waterproof cloth. And you blew them up and they'd just put them under your arms and you could float with those. And I remember losing them and at that point I decided that I could swim without them. (Laughs)

END OF INTERVIEW

# **LĀNA'I RANCH**

## **The People of Kō'ele and Keōmuku**

**VOLUME I**

**Center for Oral History  
Social Science Research Institute  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa**

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